

# RELIGIO PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL

HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY  
L.G. Draper  
VOTED TO  
ROMANCE AND GENERAL REFORM

Truth wears no mask, bows at no human shrine, seeks neither place nor applause: she only asks a hearing.

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Readers of the JOURNAL are especially requested to send in items of news. Don't say "I can't write for the press." Send the facts, make plain what you want to say, and "cut it short." All such communications will be properly arranged for publication by the Editors. Notices of Meetings, information concerning the organization of new Societies or the condition of old ones; movements of lecturers and mediums, interesting incidents of spirit communion, and well authenticated accounts of spirit phenomena are always in place and will be published as soon as possible.

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## The Law of Deterioration as Applied to Spiritual Phenomena, with Suggestions for the Abolition of Public Dark Circles.

A Paper by Mr. Jno. S. Farmer, Editor of the Psychological Review, Read Before the Members of the Central Association of Spiritualists, 38 Great Russell Street, June 26th, 1882.

One of the most hopeful and cheering signs of the times in connection with Spiritualism is the desire, growing year by year more and more apparent, to bring our facts and our theories to the tribunal of sober common sense. It is being recognized that the only attitude towards the subject capable of standing the test of time is one on which shrewd discrimination and sound judgment are brought to bear. Facts must be keenly sifted and a cool unbiased judgment exercised in dealing with the theories which they seem to suggest.

I have long thought, too, that the clouds which one after another have overshadowed the movement during the past few years have not been altogether devoid of benefit, inasmuch as they exercised a salutary influence in causing us to look more closely into our means and methods of investigation. The lessons, may be, have been hard to learn, and still harder to apply, but on that very account they have probably not been the less effectual. Our facts, however, have not succumbed to the assaults made upon them; these, as many are able to testify, cannot be taken from us. If, on the other hand, the course of events has caused us to modify our theories, or change our methods of investigation, in that case the discipline severe though it may have been, was needed—else why any change at all? As a matter of fact we must not grumble if occasionally we have to retrace our steps. Physical science has before now had to reconsider its methods and verdicts, and may have to do so again, and there is no reason to suppose that Spiritualism will prove any exception to the general rule, and jump all at once into absolute truth. Spiritual phenomena have not stood their ground by being offered up on the shrine of credulity and superstition, but only so far as their basis was established by a stern and rigid conformity to the dictates of reason and an unflinching honesty of purpose shown on the part of those who sought them. Just in the ratio that Spiritualists have adopted these methods has the movement gained ground, and become acceptable to earnest seekers after truth. The progress has been slow; at one time scarcely apparent, at others seemingly retrograde; nevertheless, it has been sure. Adopting this method, marvels and wonders may become conspicuous only by their absence; the worthies of the past may no more return to spout their bad grammar and worse sense; but we shall at least have the genuine satisfaction of knowing that the facts we are able to present to the world are so many solid and reliable additions to the science which deals with (1) Man as a spiritual being; (2) the existence of a spiritual world, and (3) the duality and the continuity of life.

It is in this spirit that I desire to draw attention to a question, which, perhaps more than any other, is calling for attention. Its scope is but partially indicated in the title I have given to this paper, for it is intimately associated with the whole question of mediumship. I can, therefore, only hope to glance briefly at a few of the more salient points which occur to me, as I cannot pretend in the present circumstances to consider fully

a question that would require a volume, if treated according to its merits.

## OUR METHODS OF INVESTIGATION REQUIRE RECONSIDERATION.

Spiritualism as a science is yet young, and notwithstanding much that is frivolous, repulsive and disheartening, there is, as I have said, a solid substratum of undeniable facts which have been elicited in the same way as the facts of any other physical science. It is, therefore, I think, a matter for congratulation that after making due allowance for mistakes and exaggerations—unavoidable with those who are seeking in what are practically untried paths—there remains so much to us of sterling value. No other branch of human knowledge and inquiry has, at a corresponding period of its career, been able to exhibit such a clean bill of health; and if we have met with shadows and disappointments in our research, if many of our conclusions have been unsatisfactory, and our methods of inquiry inadequate, these are but the natural outcome of an exploration which only begins where physical science ends. While admitting this, however, I take it for granted that we are all agreed on the necessity of at once making backward tracks when once such a course is shown to be necessary.

Such a reconsideration of method, it appears to me, is apparently essentially necessary with regard to the lines of investigation adopted in circles to which the public are not only admitted, but in many cases counselled to go, in order to satisfy their curiosity, reasonable or otherwise, as to the truth of Spiritualism. It is notorious that a large percentage of the exposures, real or alleged, which have taken place in this country or America during the past ten years, have arisen out of these circles, or circles conducted on the same lines. It is hardly, therefore, beyond the bounds of truth to assume that, in some way or other, the conditions which usually obtain in such séances are mainly responsible for the disasters to which I have alluded. That such is really the case seems borne out by the fact that in America, where for every one circle that is kind existent here ten or twenty may be counted, exposures are far more frequent. Indeed, so rampant has fraud and imposture become in that country in connection with Spiritualism, that at last educated and intelligent Spiritualists have been forced to take public action with regard to this question. Few, save those who have constantly and diligently read the American periodicals, can form any conception of the extent to which this plague-spot has permeated the movement across the Atlantic. To its credit be it said, the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, of Chicago, so ably edited and managed by Colonel Bundy, has, for many years, invariably and unhesitatingly discountenanced any temporizing in the matter. I wish the same could be recorded of all its contemporaries. In some cases, however, the attitude adopted has, I am afraid, led the outside world to think that the fraud, if not actively countenanced and supported, has at least been winked at. Whatever may be the cause leading to such action a grievous mistake has been made in thinking that the exposure of these fraudulent manifestations will in any way hurt the cause of Spiritualism. Far more harm has been done by resorting to weak and foolish excuses under the plea that mediums must be defended at all hazards. Spiritualism indeed occupies an ignoble and humiliating position if forced to such shifts as this, and in such a case we may just as well write its epitaph to-day as a year hence; yet this is the position to which we are often driven through public séances as now conducted. Is it not possible that a knowledge of this has had much to do with the attitude of the press and the public generally towards the whole subject? They have seen instances of fraud and chicanery, palpable to anyone with his eyes open—or for the matter of that with them half closed—either explained away in a most senseless manner, or altogether passed over in silence, whereas the clear line of duty lay in a protest against such imposition. If we have fraudulent mediums in our ranks it is our duty to get rid of them; to remain silent is to abet the evil.

No one more than myself recognizes the obligations we are under to true and genuine mediums. They cannot, however, suffer from a vigorous denunciation of fraud. It is because I recognize so fully our duties in this respect that I plead so warmly for a change in the methods of inquiry into which we have allowed ourselves to drift; and it is my firm conviction that true mediums, above all others, will benefit most from such a change. I would fain believe that they will be among the first to recognize and admit the need, in their own interest, of the suggestions I am making.

## THE GENERAL RESULTS OF PUBLIC DARK CIRCLES ARE UNSATISFACTORY.

Having thus introduced the subject, I offer my first suggestion, viz.:

1. That public dark circles have done much to damage and discredit the facts of Spiritualism in the eyes of investigators and the public generally.

It is, I think, an open question whether anyone has ever been convinced of the reality of the phenomena by what has taken place at absolutely dark circles. If conviction has resulted, it has only been after a long and weary investigation, for which few have inclination, and fewer still time and opportunity. Yet it is to these dark and cabinet circles that most inquirers and investigators are introduced. Can we, in these circum-

stances, wonder that the observer refuses to believe, in the absence of better evidence, that what takes place is not the work of the medium? Is not the waning interest and consequent falling away of many who were at first interested in, and attracted to, the subject an inevitable result of the almost utter impossibility of witnessing the phenomena under anything like satisfactory conditions? The very means taken for convincing skeptics in these circles—what has facetiously been termed the "bolt and bar and sticking plaster" method of investigation—are notoriously ineffective. In very few cases is the desired end attained even after prolonged experience, while irreparable harm is worked in the public estimation against Spiritualism generally by reason of its verdict on what really is no fair representation of the subject, but which, nevertheless, is the only phase brought to their notice. The very first essentials of accurate observation, and of candor and honesty, are wanting. In the absence of light or in the seclusion of the medium from view, it is hardly to be expected that the doubter will believe that phenomena which do take place, or forms that appear, are not either the work of, or the medium himself, in spite of denials to the contrary. Naturally, he prefers the evidence of his own senses, even though he may have carefully searched the premises and assisted in securing and binding the medium with his own hands. To his mind, the whole thing appears more or less a conjuring trick, and that often a very weak one. The conditions under which he observes all tend to suggest a doubt as to whether what takes place is fair and above board. The suspicion will creep in; more must be seen, and more and more, and after all, then, few can say that in the long run satisfactory results have been forthcoming. This was my own feeling for many years, and even now I must confess that I cannot place implicit confidence in records of what I have seen under the conditions in question. Really good evidence is thus liable to be vitiated by this doubtful element surrounding these particular classes of circles. My doubts may be illogical, but so it is. They are there, and the best must be made of them. They do not arise through a mistrust of the medium; it is rather the conditions that are to blame, and I do not doubt there are many who, if they look closely into the matter, are in precisely the same predicament.

Let me pass, however, to higher ground. Are these dark séances at all like the ideal which many of us have in view when we seek "an hour's communion with the dead"? This ideal is no illusion; it has been implanted by records of, in the main, private séances—in the family circle, where Spiritualism is seen at its best. But the divergence between the two is so great that one might almost be excused the thought that the one had no connection with the other. Of course, no well-informed inquirer expects in a public circle the sanctity and holy sense of communion which we naturally and rightly look for in private, but were the same rules observed as far as practicable in the one case as have generally obtained in the other in bygone days, there would not be such a widely different result. Private mediums, moreover, are falling victims to this state of affairs, the one reacting upon the other. It is hardly surprising that as the old generations of mediums—those who remember the early days of the movement—pass away, those that succeed them should tend more and more to follow the same lines as have been presented to them in public séances.

## PUBLIC DARK CIRCLES CONSIDERED FROM AN OUTSIDER'S POINT OF VIEW.

Considering all this, are we not bound to confess that our critics, who laugh to scorn the idea of departed friends coming in such questionable guise and under such apparently conjurer's show conditions, have much of reason in their criticism? Let us look at the matter fairly and squarely and consider the question for a moment with the eyes of an outsider going for the first time to an ordinary public circle. In doing so we may revive memories of our own introduction which from various reasons, have given way to mature knowledge. And mature knowledge, it may be argued, will work the cure in other cases, but it must be remembered that we who have passed the Rubicon and surmounted the difficulties in the way of a right and true understanding of what Spiritualism really means and is, are but as units to hundreds who have fared very differently and retired either in disgust or despair.

To return to the typical case before us. An inquirer wishes to see something of Spiritual phenomena, of which he has heard much, and perhaps read a little. He is drawn to the subject, as many are, by a desire to learn something of those loved ones who have passed out of his life, leaving behind nothing but a weary and aching void. He yearns for knowledge where faith has failed, notwithstanding the "sure and certain hope of a joyful reunion"—for an assurance based on demonstrable fact, that the grave does not hold within its compass the brightest, and best, and dearest hopes of his kind. A speculative belief in immortality fails to satisfy his soul's deepest need—he requires palpable demonstration by well attested facts, and a real and living communion with those who have passed beyond the bonds of time. This he has read, or been told, Spiritualism supplies, and he says, "Show me the proofs of what you say, let me hear their voices, clasp their hands, behold their forms, and enjoy the same sweet communion as of yore." What takes place? The doors are fast locked, the merest

glimmer of light of day or night is scrupulously excluded, and in a contaminated atmosphere he is initiated into the Holy of Holies of—a Spiritualistic farce; or as it has often been described, a veritable witches' frolic. Everything said and done reminds him of a very second-rate Punch and Judy show, with a heavy man and comic business thrown in. What can he think of it? How did you or I regard the interminable small talk, bald platitudes, and weak, very weak jokes? Is it at all strange that, having regard to the suspicious conditions under which the phenomena take place, he should either throw up the whole thing in disgust, or endorse the popular estimate of Spiritualists as being either fools, dupes, or duped?

## UNSATISFACTORY PUBLIC CIRCLES OFFER THE VESTIBLES TO EQUALLY OBJECTIONABLE PRIVATE SEANCES.

But, it may be argued, such an one has not been properly advised if he goes to a public séance expecting to obtain personal communications from his own friends. Perhaps not, but in many cases there is no opportunity for receiving preparatory warning or counsel, and Spiritualism is judged by what they see of it under the only circumstances open to them. And even suppose he does try in his own house, the pattern method of investigation set before him is closely followed in all its objectionable details, only to end with similar results. The darkness, cabinets, and other paraphernalia are imitated, and the private circle gets infested with a low order of intelligence, with all the consequent deterioration. Unsatisfactory public circles are often the vestibules to equally objectionable private ones. Eliza Peget's life is proof required? I will give one instance out of many. In the initial number of *Spiritual Notes* (July, 1878) pp. 1 and 2, Mr. Eglington published a brief account of his development as a medium. A few passages bear out my contention in a most singular manner. He relates how at first he treated the subject with ridicule, but was eventually persuaded to sit with the rest of the family. I continue in his own words:

"My manner was that of a boy full of fun; but as soon as I found myself in the presence of the 'inquirers,' a strange and mysterious feeling came over me, which I could not shake off. I sat down at the table, determined that if anything happened I would put a stop to it! Something did happen, but I was powerless to prevent it. The table began to show signs of life and vigor, and suddenly rose off the ground, and steadily raised itself in the air, until we had to stand to reach it. This was in full gaslight. It afterwards answered, intelligently, questions which were put to it, and gave a number of test communications to persons present. . . . We had communications which proved conclusively, to my mind, that the spirit of my mother really returned to us. Then I began to realize how mistaken—how utterly empty and unspiritual—had been my past life, and I felt a pleasure indescribable in knowing beyond a doubt that those who had passed from earth could return again and prove the immortality of the soul. In the quietness of our family circle, only broken by the admission of friends to witness the marvellous manifestations, we enjoyed to the full extent our communion with the souls of the departed; and many are the happy hours I have spent in this way. . . . A few months after our first séance stronger phenomena gradually developed. . . . We finally obtained materializations, not as we generally obtain them now—with a cabinet or darkened chamber—but in the moonlight, while we all sat round the table; and, generally, the figure of my deceased mother appeared, radiant and transcendently beautiful, and (please mark what follows) looking more as we imagine a spirit to be than any I have seen since, and they are not a few. I was induced to sit in the dark for manifestations by a friend of mine, who had been to a séance of a professional medium, and who gave a wonderful account of what had taken place. After I did this the really spiritual séances we had been having seemed to leave us, and in their stead we obtained the rough, physical phenomena so common to dark séances."

This, to my certain knowledge, is not an isolated instance; there are many cases on record in which the quality of the phenomena has very materially altered when a change from light to dark circles has been made.

## PAST AND PRESENT METHODS COMPARED.

It is also instructive to compare the present state of affairs with those current in the early days of the movement before the innovation of cabinets and total darkness. It is difficult to say when these practices first began to find favor. I have endeavored in vain to fix a definite period, but probably their introduction was effected by the Davenport Brothers, they being the first I can trace as having used cabinets. The transition from a modified light to total darkness is not so difficult to account for, but I do not think I need trouble about it now. Suffice it to say that in many ways an evil day when Spiritualists encouraged either; they hardly knew the danger to which they, unwittingly no doubt, exposed Spiritualism as a public movement or they would have shunned both as they would have avoided a pestilence. For the sake of curiosity I have recently gone through a file of the earlier volumes of the *Spiritual Magazine* and taking, say one hundred séances, I have found it distinctly stated in ninety cases that the light was good, either of twilight, moonlight, gas, candles, or blazing fire—at all events sufficient to enable accurate observation, the medium generally being allowed to

lie upon a sofa in full view of the company. In five cases nothing is stated as to the light and the other five took place in the dark. As will be observed in the instance I shall quote, in addition to twilight, or moonlight, or both, gas and candles, or the firelight were also utilized, so that no cause of complaint as to the amount of light can be fairly urged. Windows too were often left open, allowing the sweet evening air to ventilate the room—very different to something I have witnessed during late years where, in addition to every crevice and cranny through which a ray of light could come being blocked, the atmosphere has been poisoned by water being thrown upon a blazing fire in order to quench it, and I verily believe half a nod would have caused the chimney to be blocked also. And then it was expected that Spirits with any shred of self-respect would come and visit that séance! I mentally congratulated myself that I was not a spirit out of the form, and expected to endure such indignities. To return, however. The statistics I have quoted show that good light, free ventilation, and medium in full view were the rule, and the contrary the exception. Now for a sample séance or two, which I will make as short as practicable, quoting essential points only. I will quote one with Mr. Home and one with Mrs. Marshall, selected at random. Equally satisfactory records could be instanced with other mediums such as Mr. Squires, Mrs. Jencken, Dr. Redman, etc. I will take Mr. Home first. The record is by a Dr. Blank whose *bona fides* is attested by the editors, one of whom was also present at the séance in question. He says:—

"The circle consisted of seven persons and Mr. Home. The raps came in about ten minutes on the table—on the floor—about the room—the whole floor vibrated with a tremor. The table was then lifted from the ground about two feet, all our hands being placed on the surface, we standing the while, and one of the circle knelt on the ground and saw it so suspended. We are frequently and strongly touched as if by a hand, one after the other. A fragrance as of strawberries all at once pervaded the room; cool breaths of air wafted on our foreheads. A large bell was rung below the table, and was then taken from the hand of the hostess of the evening, and placed first in one of the visitor's hands and then taken from his and placed in the hands of X., and then taken out of it, and thrown below the table. The accordion played the most beautiful music in the hand of Mr. Home, and also while suspended alone, as was verified by one of the circle, under the table. It was the largest accordion I ever saw; and one lid was held by Mr. Home in one hand, the other hand being, as those of all present, on the table. The raps were continued from time to time in reply to questions put, etc. During all these phenomena six wax lights were burning in the room. It was then terminated by raps that the lights were to be put out, and the table moved into the window. There was the light of a summer night, mixed with the street gas, and enough to enable us to distinctly distinguish objects in the room, each other's faces, etc. The curtain was drawn back, not by any one present, and the blind similarly pulled up and down, and the light thus regulated. The accordion again played, and gently floated by itself through the air. It touched my forehead in passing. I then saw the table-covered moved by something under it, and having the shape and action of fingers. In a few minutes X. and I both distinctly twice saw, as did every one else present, a hand like that of a dark mulatto woman's rise up to the level of the table in the open unoccupied space between the table and the window, and take up a pencil laid on a piece of paper and draw on it what afterwards we found to be a leaf and an eagle's head. I am most positive, and so is X., that this hand belonged to no one in the room, and that it could not by any possibility so belong."

The other example runs as follows:—

"I was asked by a friend to accompany him to Mrs. Marshall's rooms. . . . We found her sitting with two ladies. We joined the circle, and it was afterwards increased by the addition of two gentlemen. The table moved; we were touched on the leg, and the raps, loud and varied and intelligent, were again repeated. . . . Towards the end of the evening we asked if the hands could be shown. We were placed in a circle; and we occupied two-thirds of the table—one-third was by direction left open for the hand to appear. The gentleman at the point nearest the hand felt it touching him, placing the bell which was put on the floor on his knee, and at last I distinctly saw a luminous body like the back of a hand on the horizon of the table. The room had the mixed light of a summer's evening and the reflected gas-light from the street."

These narratives, as I have said, were selected at random, and although they do not relate the most wonderful manifestations which took place through the mediums in question, there being many more startling from which I could have chosen, yet they are very apt illustrations for comparison. In the first place, the conditions are rather below than above the representative conditions of that period, and in the second, both records relate to what may be termed public séances, with a mixed company, and are therefore eligible for comparison. Need I recapitulate the points of difference? Are they not very apparent to any one familiar with the public circles of to-day? There seems, indeed, to be only one answer to the question as to which is to be preferred.

Continued on Eighth Page.





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Exchanges and individuals in quoting from the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, are requested to distinguish between editorial articles and the communications of correspondents.

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When newspapers or magazines are sent to the JOURNAL containing matter for special attention, the sender will please draw a line around the article to which he desires to call notice.

CHICAGO, ILL., Saturday, August 5, 1882.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscriptions not paid in advance are charged at the old price of \$3.15 per year. To accommodate those old subscribers who through force of habit or inability, do not keep paid in advance, the credit system is for the present continued, but it must be distinctly understood that it is wholly as a favor on the part of the Publisher, as the terms are PAYMENT IN ADVANCE.

The Evolution of Truth and the Difficulties Attending It.

What is truth? This is a question that is now and has been for an indefinite period in the past agitating the fertile minds of those who are designated as scientists, and who are supposed to be as much wiser than the ordinary, plodding mortal, as the Comanche Indian is superior in wisdom to the anthropoid apes.

Whenever we examine the records of some of the ancient scientists, we are astonished at their consummate imbecility, and the crude conceptions and conclusions at which they arrived after a thorough and exhaustive course of deductive reasoning.

The scientists are expected to evolve truth and lead humanity to a higher and grander plane of observation, but they do so very slowly if it be true that nearly all modern discoveries had their counterparts in the remote past, as set forth by Wendell Phillips in his celebrated lecture on "The Lost Arts."

earth the usual quantum of heat, puny mortals will not complain to any great extent at the difference of opinion in reference to its exact distance from us, or cavil with the enthusiastic scientist who exclaims: "The sun controls the compass, marshals the northern lights, permits or forbids ice-crystal clouds to hover high in our atmosphere, its rays focalize and radiate life, and in the growing plant, the burning coal, the flying bird, the glaring lightning, the blooming flower, the rushing engine, the roaring cataract and the pattering rain, we see only the varied manifestations of this one energizing force arising from sunbeams!"

It is an established fact that scientists and distinguished inventors are not infallible, being simply searchers after truth; and often not so much, perhaps, to ameliorate the condition of mankind, as to enrich themselves.

"What is truth?" has been, and will continue to be, the puzzling question. This is an age of impostors, frauds, charlatans, counterfeiters and mountebanks, who cast a perplexing shade of doubt over our food, art, science and religion.

Sometimes frauds and errors are not easily circumvented and overcome. The Cardiff Giant made in Chicago in 1868, and subsequently buried at Cardiff, N. Y., was a masterpiece of workmanship, a perplexing puzzle to distinguished savans, and the most complete bogus materialization of the rare fossil remains of a now extinct race of giants that was ever presented to the world for recognition and endorsement.

In the evolution of truth the thoughtful investigator is constantly beset with great difficulties! If he carefully and critically examine his food, he will probably find that some portion of it has been adulterated; if he analyze his champagne, if he is foolish enough to use it, the chances are that he will obtain a deleterious mixture of various poisonous ingredients; if he visit the various churches he will find the respective members worshipping one God, or a Trinity of Gods; also a subordinate devil with a long tail and eleven feet, against whom they are waging an interminable warfare.

truth he directs his scrutinizing attention to Spiritualism, and though frequently imposed upon by wily, artful impostors, he there finds the truth demonstrable to all the senses. There is no doubt of it whatever. Through independent slate-writing, with the slate in his own hand, he obtains a message from one unknown to the medium. He receives messages from those he loved; has test after test given him. With the aid of the clairvoyant and trance medium his soul becomes illuminated by the grandeur of a new philosophy and religion.

The Abolition of Public Dark Circles.

We trust that every reader will peruse with care the able and thoughtful paper by Mr. Farmer, reproduced on another page of this issue; and having read it, will reflect and act upon it, in so far as practicable. The subject of Public Dark Circles was very thoroughly discussed in the JOURNAL several years ago, in response to a circular sent out by us to nearly all the best known and most experienced Spiritualists in the country.

That there are conditions which darkness does not vitiate is true, yet the moral atmosphere of such places, history demonstrates beyond successful denial, steadily deteriorates. The physical phenomena usually obtainable in dark circles would not, of themselves, convince the calm judgment of the investigator; they require to be supplemented by mental tests; and the genuineness of the former are often predicated upon the latter—a most dangerous and misleading practice.

We are glad to note and publicly record the encouraging fact, that the morale of the medial profession is of late steadily improving; that those mediums who while themselves, pure and honest, have in the past too often been passive as to the acts of those disgracing the profession, are waking up to the necessity of a code of ethics to which every public medium shall be held amenable.

Some naughty fellow, possibly a rival in business, started the story that Lydia E. Pinkham had failed in business. The general face of this good woman is familiar to our readers as it is also to the readers of 7,999 other papers in the country, and we know that all would regret any disaster to the lady.

There will be a Spiritualist Camp Meeting at Queen City Park, Burlington, Vt., August 21st to September 11th, 1882.

The Leading Mediums of Chicago Speak in Language that is Plain.

The following declaration originated in the desire of a number of Chicago mediums to express their views and place themselves on record before the public. The list embraces all of the most widely known, and a majority of the best test mediums in the city; several whose names do not appear are out of town.

To Whom it may Concern.

We the undersigned having by personal investigation satisfied ourselves of the continuity of life beyond the grave and the ability of spirits to return under certain conditions, and demonstrate that they still live, feel that such knowledge is precious. We believe intercommunication between the two worlds to be a subject too sacred to be trifled with for any purpose whatever.

Therefore, we, as Spiritualists, heartily approve of the object sought by the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL in its steady, fearless and vigorous endeavor to elucidate truth and eliminate error; to raise the standard of the medial profession, and to place Spiritualism upon the firm foundation of a scientific basis.

- Mrs. Sarah F. De Wolf, 22 1/2 Walnut St. Mrs. R. C. Simpson, 45 N. Sheldon St. Mrs. A. A. Nichols, 217 S. Sangamon St. Mrs. Maud E. Lord, 10 N. Throop St. Mrs. Isa Wilson-Porter, 500 W. Lake St. Mrs. E. Silverston, 15 N. Sheldon St. Mrs. L. A. Blood, 461 W. Washington St. Mrs. Julia H. Bishop, 15 N. Peoria St. Mrs. S. E. Bromwell, 671 W. Lake St. Mrs. Hattie Davis, 138 W. Madison St. Mrs. Clara A. Robinson, 2644 Indiana Ave. Mrs. M. C. Friesner, 51 N. Sheldon St. Dr. J. Wilbur, 430 W. Randolph St. Mrs. R. J. Rood, 59 S. Elizabeth St. J. W. Harcourt, 23 Bishop Court. Mrs. J. W. Harcourt, 23 Bishop Court. V. J. David, La Salle and Madison Sts. Mrs. Sarah J. Perry, Prairie Ave.

- Henry Slade, 238 W. 34th St., New York City. Dr. E. W. Stearns, Perry Prairie, Wis. A. B. French, Clys., Ohio. Mrs. Clara Mayo-Stevens, San Francisco, Cal. Mrs. E. F. Jay Bullene, New York City.

\* Healing, but at times other phases. \* Not a public medium.

"Imagined."

Mrs. Lincoln, widow of President Lincoln, died at Springfield, Ill., on the 10th, from paralysis. From the shock of her husband's violent death she never wholly recovered, and from that time on she was never without a perfectly sane woman.

Mrs. Lincoln, it is true, sought consolation, and obtained it, too, in Spiritualism. She did not "imagine" that she had communications with her husband and her deceased sons, Willie and Thaddeus, but she did actually hold sweet communion with them, the same as millions of others are doing with their friends, and she derived great comfort therefrom.

Very reluctantly the editor of the Liberal, published at Lawrence, Kansas, announces that on account of continued poor health, he thinks it best to attempt only fortnightly issues until September next.

Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Mott passed through this city last week on their way home to Memphis, Mo. Mr. Mott tells us he had a pleasant time.

An Easy Method of Getting to Heaven.

It was to be hoped that after Charles Stiles was shot, in the moment which elapsed ere his soul took its flight, he turned his eyes toward that Lord Jesus whom he once intimately and lovingly knew, in renitence, again embraced the Saviour, and passed out to his eternity in His affection.

The above is an extract from a sermon delivered by Rev. John Williamson at the First Methodist Church of this city. After Charles Stiles had lived disreputably for many years, consorting with a wily, licentious Italian woman, and living in all respects a fast life, even then if he had "turned his eyes towards that Lord Jesus whom he once intimately and lovingly knew," he would have been instantly transformed into an angel of light, and be now sauntering around the throne, while the murderer—probably his superior as a human being—is safely confined in jail, and if he don't seek Jesus she will be eventually consigned to hell, there to suffer forever!

If Rev. John Williamson will exercise a little common sense, he can readily see how exceedingly foolish his statement with reference to Stiles was, and what would be the pernicious effect on society generally if such a free and easy method of getting to heaven, was generally believed and adopted.

Alf. S. Hutchinson.

This name is familiar to the old readers of the JOURNAL as that of the gentleman, who, several years ago, aided us so faithfully and effectually in unearthing the frauds committed by Mrs. Stewart and her confederates at Pence Hall, Terre Haute. On the second page will be found an article from the Terre Haute Gazette, giving an account of his death. From our first acquaintance with Mr. Hutchinson, up to the time of his death, we have had good facilities for studying his character, and found him always truthful, conscientious, deliberate in forming conclusions, trustworthy and exemplary.

It is really a sad state of affairs when an unfortunate criminal making every effort to reform, instead of being encouraged, is "hounded by the police." A man by the name of McDonough, who was under arrest and who has served two terms of a year each in the penitentiary and has been in the Bridewell several times, told the court that he had been making earnest efforts to do right in Chicago, but, having once been sent to the penitentiary for an offense committed by some of his companions, the police had singled him out as a thief who must be watched.

A Spiritualist Testifying.

At the preliminary examination of the mysterious Slesley murder case at Lancaster, Wis., the father of the murdered girl testified as follows:

"In my religious belief I am liberal. I am what is called a Spiritualist, and I don't care who knows it. I have had evidence as plain as that two and two make four, that departed spirits communicate to us, and, if you please, I have had communication with this girl. I can tell you language she used when those shots were fired. She said, 'Oh, my God, has it come to this! Father! father! help me!' I had also an impression communication telling me that that (pointing to Slesley) is the murderer. The night of the charivari Slesley and wife never undressed to go to bed. Between twelve and two o'clock, he enticed her out of the house down to where she was found, and then got his left arm around her, catching her by the throat, fired three shots with his right hand, and then finding there was still life, gave the fourth shot. Then he put out the fire and laid her out. His mother and the Hamiltons, threw dirt to cover it up.







